

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-09 L-03 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 AID-20

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R 211131 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9223

NFO RUESKA/ AMCONSUL KADUNA 7711

AMCONSUL IBADAN

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAS, PINS, NI

SUBJECT: GOWON MOVES AGAINST TEACHERS, WARNS STUDENTS

REF: LAGOS 31 61

1. SUMMARY: GOWON HAS TOLD UNIVERSITY STRIKERS TO GO BACK TO WORK BY APRIL 25 OR BE FIRED, AND INDICATES END OF FMG PATIENCE WITH STUDENT AGITATION OVER NYSC. STRIKE EXPECTED TO COLLAPSE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON EVENING APRIL 19, HEAD OF STATE IN RADIO BROADCAST ANNOUNCED THAT ALL STRIKING STAFF AT UNIVERSITIES LAGOS AND IBADAN MUST SIGNIFY IN WRITING TO VICE- CHANCELLORS BY APRIL 24 THEIR WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO WORK UNDEREXISTING SALARIES AND BENEFITS, AND MUST REPORT FOR DUTY AT THEIR CAMPUSES APRIL 25. THOSE WHO DO NOT COMPLY WILL BE DEEMED TO HAVE RESIGNED EFFECTIVE APRIL 25, MUST MOVE OUT OF OFFICIAL RESIDENCES BY THAT DATE, AND ARE NOT THEREAFTER TO ENTER OR APPROACH UNI-

VERSITY CAMPUSES. GOWON PROMISED APPROPRIATE ACTION TO ENFORCE ORDERS, AND TO DEAL SUMMARILY WITH VIOLATORS. HE SAID FMG WILL NOT REVIEW ITS DECISION ON BENEFITS AND SALARIES CURRENTLY ALLOCATED TO UNIVERSITY
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STAFF. HE ALSO CLOSED TWO UNIVERSITIES AND ORDERED
CAMPUSES CLEARED.

3. IN TONE OF EXASPERATION, GOWON NOTED THAT TEACHERS
WERE OPERATING CONTRARY TO LAW OF THE LAND AND HAD
IGNORED GOVERNMENT OFFER OF DIALOGUE. HE ADDED THAT EVENTS
OF PAST THREE MONTHS HAVE CAUSED HIM TO DOUBT HIS PREVIOUS
TRUST IN UNIVERSITY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS. HE EXPRESSED
GRIEF THAT FMG LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT " TO TAKE THIS DECISION."

4. KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE SAYS GOWON' S DECISION ON THE TWO
FEDERALLY- ADMINISTERED UNIVERSITIES WILL BE FOLLOWED BY
IDENTICAL DECISIONS FROM STATE GOVERNORS APPLYING TO OTHER
FOUR UNIVERSITIES.

5. REACTION FROM STRIKERS THROUGH APRIL 21 IS STUNNED
SILENCE. MEETINGS REPORTEDLY BEING HELD AMONG VARIOUS GROUPS
(UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES, UNIONS, INFLUENTIAL CITIZEN MEDIATORS)
TO DISCUSS REOPENING CAMPUSES APRIL 25. PRESIDENT NATIONAL
UNION NIGERIAN STUDENTS APPEALED TO MEMBERS APRIL 20 " TO
STEER CLEAR" OF DISPUTE. MOST NEWSPAPER COMMENT APPLAUDE DECISION.
TRIBUNE CALLS ON TEACHERS TO SUBMIT, BUT CALLS GOVERNMENT MOVE
" HARSH AND HUMILIATING."

6. COMMENT: GOWON' S STRONG STAND AGAINST INTERNALLY
DIVIDED AND ALL BUT LEADERLESS STRIKERS IS LIKELY TO
END STRIKE BY APRIL 25. HIS REFERENCE TO EVENTS OF
PAST THREE MONTHS AND INCLUSION OF STUDENTS IN CHASTENING
REMARK INDICATES FMG DECISION ALSO TO TOLERATE NO MORE
AGITATION OVER THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS.
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